DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 095 119 SP 008 296

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TITLE	Performance Evaluation of the Educational Leader (PEEL): Another Breakthrough in Competency Based Educational Administration.
PUB DATE	Jul 74
NOTE	8p.
JOURNAL CIT	CCBC Notebook. The Competency Based Curriculum; v3 n1 p18-25 Jul 1974
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.75 HC-$1.50 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS	*Educational Administration; *Models; *Performance Criteria; *Systems Approach
IDENTIFIERS	PEEL; *Performance Evaluation of the Education Leader

ABSTRACT

This paper describes the Performance Evaluation of the Education Leader (PEEL) program, initiated from a study to define the competent school administrator and to develop an instrument to measure administrative competence objectively and accurately. The resulting PEEL materials include the following: (a) "Guidelines for Evaluation: The School Administrator--Seven Areas of Competence," which defines areas of competence and lists behavioral competence statements that describe specifically what the administrator does in competently performing his role; (b) the "Study Guide," which lists questions for use in conducting a searching program of administrative introspection and professional evaluation; and (c) "Performance Evaluation of the Education Leader," the PEEL instrument designed to measure the seven areas of competence through a clearly defined, objective data gathering process. The five phases of the PEEL model are described--awareness, training, implementation, evaluation, and follow-up. Validation studies are being conducted to measure content validity and actual change in administrative performance. A 6-item bibliography is included in the paper. (PD)

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The following article describes a program for the evaluation of administrative competence developed by Dr. Howard J. Demeke of the Department of Educational Administration at Arizona State University. The program is unique in that it includes: (1) a behaviorally stated definition of administrative competence, (2) an instrument for use in measuring performance in terms of the definition, (3) a training program designed to provide participants with the skills necessary for the collection of objective data and its assessment through use of the instrument, and (4) a follow-up (implementation) phase designed to facilitate, measure, and reinforce desired administrative behavioral change. The authors were assisted by Howard in the preparation of this article. (Ed.)

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF THE EDUCATIONAL LEADER (PEEL): ANOTHER BREAKTHROUGH IN COMPETENCY BASED EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

by Christa Metzger and Steven B. Lynch
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The question "What is a competent school administrator?" remains a central concern of the profession of educational administration. School leaders now largely accept the premise that they must face up to this question by clearly defining, in behavioral terms, those competencies needed for effective performance of the administrator's role. A distinction is made between competence and effectiveness. A definition of administrative competence, when validated by the profession, becomes the criterion of effectiveness on which an assessment is based. In a competency based program for the evaluation of administrative performance, it is crucial to provide and appropriately relate both of these elements:

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the definition of administrative competence and a reliable measuring instrument for assessing levels of competency attainment. Competencies must be stated in terms of the actual performance of administrators so that they may be measured objectively. In other words, anything to be measured must first be defined.

the PEEL (Performance Evaluation of the Educational Leader) program meets the foregoing requirement by including a carefully coordinated and well-researched definition of administrative competence, as well as an instrument which, when properly utilized, permits objective measurement of performance in terms of the definition.

Development of PEEL

Concerned with the lack of a viable definition of the school administrator's total role, Dr. Howard J. Demeke, Arizona State University, initiated a study to define the competent school administrator and to develop an instrument to measure administrative competence objectively and accurately. In 1967, Dr. Demeke entered into an arrangement with the administrators of the Madison School District, Phoenix, Arizona for the purpose of developing a program for the evaluation of the principal's competence. The resulting publication, Madison Administrative Growth Program Through Self-Evaluation (MAPS) presented a definition of selected areas of professional competence identified with the school principalship, together with an instrument for measuring levels of competence. In August, 1968, the administrators of the Mesa Elementary School District, Mesa, Arizona, entered into a similar agreement with the author for the purpose of developing their own program for evaluating the principal's competence. There was a remarkable similarity in the areas of competence of the principalship developed separately by the Madison and Mesa groups.

Members of a graduate seminar in educational administration at Arizona State University were challenged to review the literature thoroughly and attempt to identify and "spell out" the roles of the principal. Similar projects conducted elsewhere were studied and compared, as were research reports, monographs, and textbooks in educational administration and supervision.

As a result of these activities Demeke concluded that "it would not only be possible to identify, describe and analyze the areas of professional competence pertaining to the principalship, it would be feasible as well" (Demeke, 1972a:5). Later descriptions of the principal's role were modified to embrace the more comprehensive role of the educational leader.

The outcome of the six-year effort was the PEEL program published in 1972. PEEL materials consist of three parts:

1. The PEEL definition, Guidelines for Evaluation: The School Administrator--Seven Areas of Competence.
2. The Study Guide to the seven areas of competence.
3. The PEEL Instrument, Performance Evaluation of the Educational Leader.

The PEEL program has been used to date with over twenty groups of administrators in the WEstern United States. It was recently endorsed by the South Dakota

State Department of Education for in-service training and use in professional evaluation for all administrators in the state desiring to participate in the training and implementation of the program. Use of PEEL with administrative groups has revealed a high degree of professional acceptance of this approach as a potential means for improving administrative performance.

Validation of the PEEL Definition and Instrument

A study was conducted by Christa Metzger to determine the content validity of the PEEL definition (Metzger, 1973). The population used in the study was composed of all administrative personnel in a large Phoenix area school district. Briefly, the investigator sought to determine to what extent four groups of administrators (superintendency level staff, coordinators/consultants, secondary principals, and elementary principals) would agree with the PEEL definition. Statistical tests, using a one-way analysis of variance, revealed that there was a high degree of agreement (4.5 mean agreement on a 5 point Likert scale) among these four groups with the PEEL definition, and that no significant differences in agreement existed among administrators who were classified as either superintendency level staff, or secondary and elementary Principals. A high reliability coefficient (r .98) of the PEEL definition was established by a split-half technique followed by the Spearman-Brown prophesy formula. A similar validation study of the PEEL definition to include a national sample of administrators; a two-part study, seeking statistical evidence of the validation of both the PEEL definition and the PEEL instrument is presently being completed by Christa Metzger and Steven Lynch.

A study to measure actual change in administrative performance brought about as a result of training and implementation of the PEEL program has been funded by the South Dakota Department of Public Instruction and a consortium of seven school districts in that state. Dr. Demeke will direct the project which includes staff orientation, training of data gatherers, assessment of administrative staff performance, prescription of treatment with in-service training based on needs assessment, and performance reassessment within the ensuing year. Statistical treatment of all data will be handled by the research center of Northern State College in Aberdeen. The project will be coordinated by the learning center at Huron College in Huron.

The PEEL Model

The möbius band is used to represent the five phases of the PEEL program for the evaluation of administrative competence: (1) awareness phase, (2) training phase, (3) implementation phase, (4) evaluation phase, and (5) follow-up phase. Each phase of the model is logically connected to the whole in a continuous process of feedback and recycling. The ultimate outcome and major purpose of PEEL is improved performance of the school administrator. Although separated for purposes of analysis, the phases are interrelated and may overlap in actual practice. In the recycling process, each phase is repeated at continuously more sophisticated levels.

Awareness Phase. Staff members must be prepared for program receptivity. This readiness is based on a recognized need to improve competence and a desire to evaluate administrative performance. Mini-workshops (four to eight hours) are recommended to give orientation and overview to the PEEL concept, including

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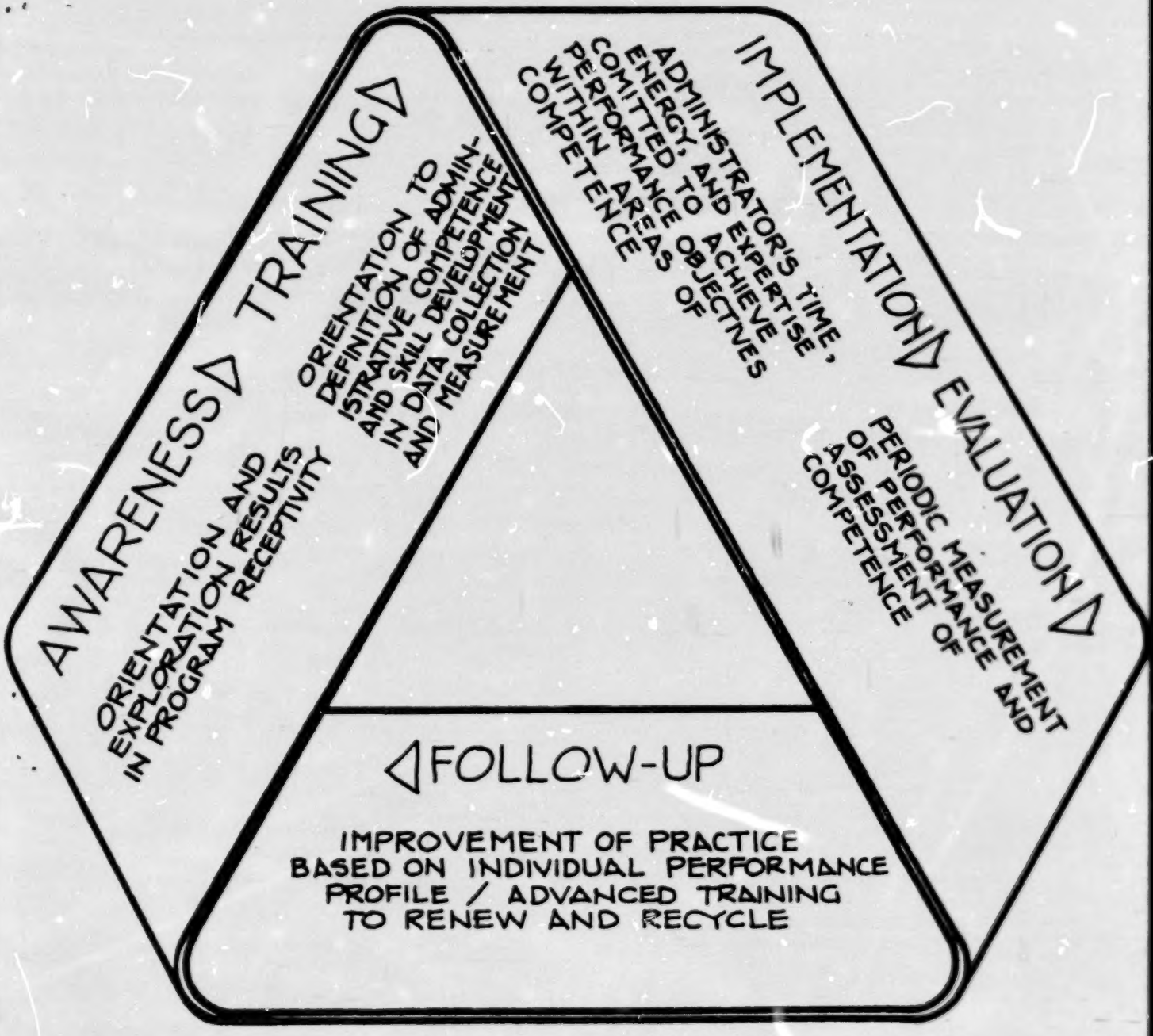
AWARENESS
ORIENTATION AND EXPLORATION RESULTS IN PROGRAM RECEPTIVITY
TRAINING
ORIENTATION TO DEFINITION OF ADMINISTRATIVE COMPETENCE AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT IN DATA COLLECTION AND MEASUREMENT
IMPLEMENTATION
ADMINISTRATOR'S TIME, ENERGY, AND EXPERTISE COMMITTED TO ACHIEVE PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES WITHIN AREAS OF COMPETENCE
EVALUATION
PERIODIC MEASUREMENT OF PERFORMANCE AND ASSESSMENT OF COMPETENCE
FOLLOW-UP
IMPROVEMENT OF PRACTICE BASED ON INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE PROFILE / ADVANCED TRAINING TO RENEW AND RECYCLE

exploration of the materials and the program. The Study Guide is suggested as a useful tool at this stage. A commitment to proceed with training and implementation of the PEEL program is a prime objective of this phase.

Training Phase. An intensive three or four day in-service workshop provides orientation to the PEEL definition and instrument and their use under simulated training conditions. Training is provided in the collection of objective data through observation and skilled interview techniques. Role-play demonstrations, group role-play, video-tape experiences and live interview experiences are utilized as part of the training in the use of the PEEL instrument for assessing administrative competence. Experience has revealed that initial training is essential and advanced training sessions are desirable. Participants include administrators primarily, but school board members and college instructors in Educational Administration and Research have also found the workshop to be a useful educational experience.

Implementation Phase. Each workshop participant sets objectives based on assessed individual needs and local school or district priorities. A commitment is thus made to re-allocate on-the-job time, energy, and expertise to the respective areas of competence. Thereafter, participants assist and support one another in implementing the PEEL-oriented program of individualized planned change in administrative behavior. A premise of the PEEL program is that any worthwhile educational experience, particularly in-service education, deserves and requires an in-depth follow-up program of implementation for deeper internalization, assimilation, and evaluation prior to recycling of new insights gained.

Evaluation Phase. Actual performance is measured and competencies assessed by means of the PEEL instrument after designated periods of time. The use of teams of fellow trainees for data gathering is highly recommended, though other means can be used. Although self-evaluation is a basic goal, participants are encouraged to share in the process of evaluation rather than trying to "go it alone"--at least during the first year.

Follow-up Phase. Through an individual performance profile developed in phase three, each administrator identifies areas of weakness and strength in his recent performance and then plans steps designed to improve his educational leadership competence. He does this individually as well as in concert with his fellow professionals. Thus, he utilizes his profession to serve his own discerned educational growth needs while making a reciprocal contribution. Advanced training, review and reassessment of goals and priorities are also part of the follow-up process.

The PEEL Materials

The PEEL Definition. The total role of today's school administrator in an era of changing pressures, needs, and demands is expressed in seven areas of competence:

1. Leader and Director of the Educational Program
2. Coordinator of Guidance and Special Educational Services
3. Member of the School Staff

4. Link between the Community and the School

5. Administrator of Personnel

6. Member of the Profession of Educational Administration

7. Director of Support Management

Under each area of competence a number of behavioral competency statements or sub-points are listed which describe specifically what the administrator does in competently performing his role.

As a director of the educational program he employs his leadership skills to enhance learning opportunities and promotes the growth of students. In coordinating the program of guidance and special services he facilitates the addition of a variety of rich dimensions to further enhance the opportunities for "normal" and "exceptional" students alike. As a member of the district and school staff he expounds his own productive team membership while moving in and out of leader and group-member roles. As a link between the community and the school he labors to secure understanding, acceptance, and support, internally and externally, for the total school program, while encouraging community participation in a continuing search for ways to improve the curriculum. As an administrator of personnel he participates in the selection of faculty and staff personnel and then works with them to the end that they may realize their full potential. As a member of the profession he demonstrates his appreciation of the social importance of his profession by carefully providing for his own professional growth, while contributing to his profession through its organizations--and by his own exemplary behavior. And, finally, as a director of support management he recognizes that the only viable "business" of the school is the education of human beings. Therefore, he strives to get on with the business of improving instruction while he delegates many other responsibilities to those who can usually do them better and more economically.

Thus, the PEEL definition provides purposeful allocation of the administrator's time, energy, and professional expertise among the seven areas of competence. The competent administrator does not work on the basis of expediency, nor does he wait for problems to come to him. Instead, his time, being valuable, is carefully planned and allocated in terms of predetermined priorities.

The PEEL Instrument. The PEEL instrument which is based on the PEEL definition was designed to measure the seven areas of competence through a clearly defined objective data gathering process. Twenty-two (22) scales represent a cross section of the thirty-nine (39) major sub-areas appearing in Guidelines for Evaluation: The School Administrator--Seven Areas of Competence. Training in the use of the instrument permits development of individual performance profiles which give the administrator a clear indication of his performance in each of the areas of competence. Local school and district input is required in a description of the attainment levels of the PEEL scales, thus giving flexibility as well as local validity to the process.

The Study Guide. A list of questions were developed for use by individuals or groups seeking to conduct a searching program of administrative introspection and professional self-evaluation. The Study Guide is a useful tool at each phase of the PEEL program.

Summary and Conclusion

The PEEL model is a competency-based approach to performance evaluation of the educational leader. It includes both a validated definition of administrative competence and an instrument for evaluating professional competence. Although the primary focus is on the practicing school administrator, the approach has important implications for pre-service training of administrators as well. PEEL considers the total role of today's educational leader and is applicable to a whole range of administrative positions. The PEEL rationale provides for varying allocations of time, energy, and professional expertise to the seven areas of competence, depending on the type of position under consideration and on the unique needs of the individual administrator. The competency statements of the PEEL definition were developed through a "weeding" of empirical research, with input from practicing school administrators as well as from the literature and research studies which purport to describe or advocate the role and functions of the educational leader. The development of this definition over a six-year period and its repeated use with practicing administrators in a number of states safeguard it from the frequent accusation of competency based education critics that competency lists are developed by "top-of-the-head" consensus or because they are pressed by state mandates. Professional competencies are analyzed, described, and behaviorally defined in the PEEL definition. Evaluation and measurement of identified competencies are an integral part of the PEEL process. The PEEL program represents a significant breakthrough in the search for a viable approach to the improvement of the professional competence--and ultimate effectiveness--of the educational administrative leader.

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SPECIAL NOTE

With sadness, the Notebook reports the death of Harold Moore who has served enthusiastically on the Editorial Board of the Notebook. We salute his efforts in behalf of education and we shall miss him especially at NCPEA and the Interest Group.

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